

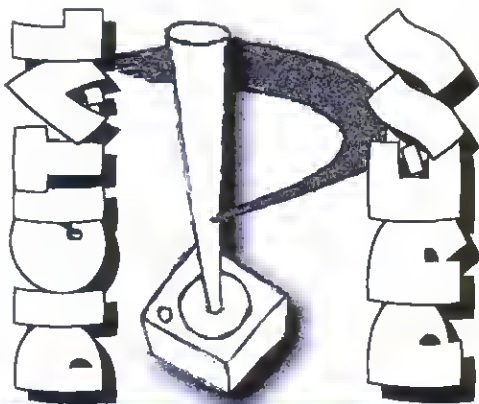
DIGITAL PRESS

THE Bio-degradable Source for Videogamers

MUST..
COMPLETE..
GAME!



#42: impossible.



DIGITAL PRESS #42 NOV/DEC 1999

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impossible. editor's BLURB by Joe Santulli

Boy, we just keep getting' later and later, don't we? Well, as impossible as it seemed to finish off this issue, it was even more impossible to complete the games you're about to read about here. The theme relates to those games that are simply TOO HARD to play.

To me, there are two kinds of impossible games. There's the kind where the skill level is just beyond me (most shooters fall into this category), and there's the kind that's artificially difficult because of bad design or controls (hmm, The Lost World game for Playstation comes immediately to mind). The gang got together and listed the ones they consider impossible for the former reason, not the latter. The latter falls into the theme "suckworthy", which we touched upon many issues ago but seem destined to try out again!

This issue also brings some new talent your way. We've added three writers to the staff, each of whom has a particular "expertise". I drafted these guys at the Classic Gaming Expo in August and they're now fully trained in the fine art of journalism. Put your hands together for Larry Anderson, Kevin "tsr" Gifford, and Roloff "deleto" DeJeu. I knew Larry best from his pre-Blue Sky Rangers Intellivision FAQ but he's a hotshot with the PC Engine. "tsr" helped us out enormously with the NES section of the DP Guide and really knows that system inside out. Roloff was largely responsible for straightening out our import Atari 2600 section as well. These are FUN guys, most importantly – and a welcome addition to our little family. Larry and Roloff have written little intros which you'll find in these pages. Kevin chooses to be the mysterious one so you'll just have to get to know him over time.

Holidays are over, the new millenium is here. There are so many new games out there – and plenty of great "retro" titles for new systems – I don't know if I'll ever leave the house again! In just the past month new versions Q*Bert, Missile Command, and Pong were released for the Playstation as well as Konami Arcade Classics and Arcade Party Pak (featuring some great oldies by Konami and Midway, respectively). The Dreamcast has a super smooth version of Hasbro's Centipede which we played earlier in the year. We'll be diving into reviews and thoughts on these games in our NEXT issue!

But for now, ease back to the mellow sounds of the DP gang as they guide you through the perilous world of games that are just way too hard.

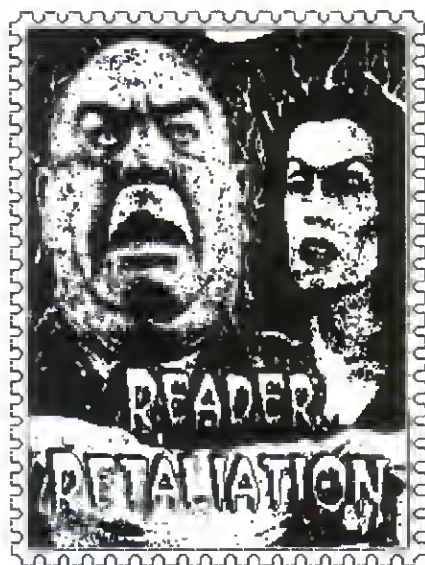
Game on.



must complete game
by Nick Robalik

Here's a FIRST! This issue's cover is done by "guest" artist Nicholas Robalik. We hope to have him around for awhile, his first effort here really "fits" the DP cover style, doesn't it?

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name this game

I recently discovered an Atari Emulator on the internet and am currently re-living my childhood. I am hoping you might be able to know the title of a game I used to love, but can't remember what it was called. I used to bike two miles after school to get to my friends house to play this game. It was not a 2600 game, but it was an Atari system. It was like a chess game, except that pises could fight one another when they entered each others space. The basic theme was 'Light vs Dark' but I don't remember much else. Do you know what game and system that it was played on? If you can help me it will greatly add to your personal Karma.

Pax Hayden
paxvh@hotmail.com

I know and love that game as well. It's called ARCHON, and it was produced by Electronic Arts for several systems, including the Commodore 64 (my favorite version), Atari 8-bit computers, and even the Nintendo NES. It was chaos vs. light, if you were chaos and chose to fight on a black square, your power was increased. Likewise for light on white tiles. To win a square you had to win an action contest. A truly remarkable innovation for its time (later ripped somewhat by Battle Chess). There were also two sequels: Archon II: Adept featured more personal choice of monsters but was also a bit less fun in my opinion. I never really got into Archon III: Exciter at all, so I don't have any opinions to offer. Incidentally, you can download the Commodore 64 emulator and the Archon game from our website listed below.

Thank-you, Thank-you, and THANK

YOU!!! I downloaded the Commodore and the program from your website. I am not really a 'gamer' like you guys, but this game is very addictive for me. -I'm having a great time!!!- It took a while how to figure out how to start the Commodore, and I still don't have sound, but I'm having a great time. You have just added significantly to your positive Karma!

Pax Hayden
paxvh@hotmail.com

how many games?

Hey Joe,

I remember that you've e-mailed to me sometime ago about Atari 2600 video games & you've said that they're 800 in all (including rare stuff, imports, duplicates & etc.), but I was making sure how many Atari 2600 stuff alone were there from 1977-1990? Because the last time that I've e-mailed to you, I'm now up to 166 on my Atari 2600 video game collection & I'll see what I can do about the collector's guide from you & find out how many in all did they have in the way of Atari 2600 video games. One more thing before I signoff, I hope to get up to 200 video games for the 2600 before the end of this millennium & hope to add more in the next millennium, but who know if we're going to live another 1000 years. Thank you, Joe.

Eddy Polivka
ecp1970@hotmail.com

Though I haven't actually counted out the total number of Atari 2600 carts that were made, if you ask ANY two people you'll get a different answer anyway. It all depends on whether you consider "clone" imports to be unique or not, ditto for games with label variations or even games that had been released under different titles (this even happens with a few Atari releases like Defender II/Stargate and Rubik's Cube/Atari Video Cube). But I WILL say that the "elite" Atari 2600 collectors have in the neighborhood of 500 unique carts based on our DP standard that a game is unique only if the ROM is unique. You can see a list of collectors and their cart counts at our website (listed below), just click on the "official collector's list" link.

feeling good

It is Tue Sept 14, 1999 Hi This is Chad. I Would like to offer You a deal on The 7800 Videogame cartidge. It is Sentinel Pal for the atari 7800 Video game cartidge. Longer That The video game caridge works I donot see a Problem. I would love to Buy The

video game from You. You seem pretty Honest to Me. I Can get a Money order very easy. All I have to do is go to Piggly Wiggly or I Can go over to Albertsons. You know that is no problem for Me. Longer That The video game works That Would be fine with Me. Longer That There is a Moneyback guaranteed I will goahead and Buy The video game from You. You are asking for \$25.00 with shipping and handling would be around \$27.00 or \$28.00 would be fine. I feel myself I am real lucky. I feel pretty good about Myself. I have found many of items like frog-pond, and Quardrun certain titles and fatal-run. I Feel real lucky. Please email Me as fast as quickly as possible. I need a confirmation on The video game cartidge for 7800. I Do collect items related to 2600 and 7800 and 5200. Please email Me a confirmation on The video game cartidge. I sure do Thank You very very much. Sure do apresheateit. Thank You. I do need to hear from You by Thursday on 16, 1999 to confirm on Your name address city state. And I need Your Phonenumber. I sure do Thank You very much. I willnot give it to anyone but Me. Thank You.

Chad Shaw
carolyn.shaw6@gte.net

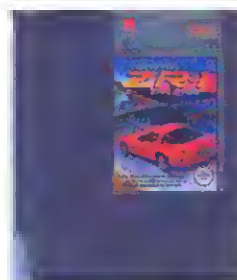
Thanks for writing (?) in. Sorry, the Sentinel game was sold, I hope you still feel pretty good about yourself. I know I sure do.

undocumented nes cart

Hey,

I figured I would e-mail you and include a scan of Corvette ZR-1 Challenge (for NES but not listed in the DP Guide) so you could verify its existence – a scan is attached. Please respond and tell me what you think.

Thank you,
HoSAY Chris
hosay@gateway.net



Hi Chris (or is it Ho-say), this game is not on the list because it was not released in the US. The scan wasn't too clear so I couldn't really make much out of the product code, but the large 'B' above it is common on UK releases and most likely specifies that it is a PAL cart. We did not include import releases for the NES system listing, only domestic, US games are shown.

the cubucolor conundrum

Hi, Alex Bilstein (Atari 2600 Nexus) suggested I contact you guys, so here it is. I have an Imagic Cubicolor cartridge that looks exactly like all the scans of every other one I've seen on the 'net, except it does not have Rob Fulop's signature on the back. It plays perfectly, and has exactly the same Avery label and lettering ("CUBICOLOR") on the face. Out of curiosity I opened the cart up since the screws are exposed fully expecting of course for this to be a fake EEPROM or homemade cart or something. Inside, the cart looks exactly like any other Imagic production cart, it even has (c) 1982 on the chip. As I explained to Alexander, I would think that in order to make a forgery of this nature one would need access to some 'real' chip manufacturing equipment. I personally think this cart is a 'Real' prototype, I think its possible that there were some Cubicolors that never got Mr. Fulop's signature. The way that I acquired it, actually may lend some credence to this theory. I bagged it at a flea market, in a large box absolutely FILLED with cool stuff, and it remains as (by far) the best classic score I ever had. Also in the box were: seven complete (!) boxed Vectrex games, many loose rares (like Snoopy & the Red Baron - Honestly I don't even remember anymore) boxed rares (some INTV ones in great condition) and tons of really good stuff. I really should have kept the brag I posted on r.g.v.c, I must have gotten a dozen letters like "Die you lucky ^\$%&#!" I think I paid \$30.00 for the package. But as far as the Cubicolor, I remember it started a little firestorm of controversy. There were a few people (probably NUMBERED Cubicolor owners) who fiercely demanded that the cart MUST be a forgery. But when I presented the argument that the cart is a real production ROM and board, and how would someone go about making such a thing, I never really received a response. So who knows - it certainly could be real. I would love to hear your opinions on the matter, I certainly feel that this could be the highlight of my classic video game collection.

Paul
paul.da.programmer@worldnet.att.net

Paul, you have one of the "original" "50" (I hesitate to call these originals since they're ALL burns, and whether there were 40 or 50 in Fulop's first run is a topic of debate). The signed ones came in the much later run (1993, I believe). The first run happened in the 80's, they were unsigned. Our own AI Backiel has one from that run as well. It should be considered a 10 in scarcity, and in my opinion is worth much more than the later, signed run of 50.

we're so awesome

I must thank and congratulate you and the others of Digital Press for your fine efforts. My last edition was version three and I was quite surprised and impressed by the additional "heft" of version five. And it's not just bulk, the book is crammed with useful and interesting info. I'm still wading through it. It would be worth the cost at twice the price, but a \$20 including shipping, it's a bargain. Clearly you've intended this for the "real" collector, the poor schmoe trying to fit his collection procurements around a family of five and a big mortgage. Again, congrats on a fine publication. The only problem is, now that I'm forty, will there be a "large print" edition?! :-)

Allan Hamill
ahamill@aot.com

Thanks Allan! Letters like yours really keep us going. Judging by the number of books we sent for the 5th edition, the SIXTH edition should be getting underway shortly. Our goal is to have a new book out in time for the Classic Gaming Expo in August 2K. Stay tuned...

label variations

Hi Joe

I was hoping you could clarify a question that I have. I checked my Digital Press vol 5 for the answer and saw no listing for any variant labels for Zelda 2 for the NES System. I picked up a Zelda 2 at a fleamarket this weekend and the label reads 'THE ADVENTURE OF LINK' with the graphic of the sword. I have another Zelda 2 cart that reads 'THE ADVENTURE OF LINK ZELDA II' with the graphic. My question is the labels are clearly different because one says Zelda II and the other does not. Did you know about this and do you know if one is more rare than the other? I can scan in both and email them to you if you would like to see the two. Just curious Thanks

Dustin Sullo
dustin.sullo@envoy.com

Dustin, I had to check with our resident expert (tsr) on this one. The cart with no "ZELDA II" on it is the re-release version. The differences are more obvious with the box. It's not "ER".

THE NEW GUY

Part 1: Meet Roloff DeJeu

First off, very graphically and visually oriented person. The day I go blind I'll jump off the highest building of Amsterdam with sliced wrists.

I'm about to graduate from an Art Collage where I studied Image & Media Technology (animation, video-editing, media design, etc.) I have a full-time job as a visual effects artist at a small acclaimed and awarded post-production facility, part of a production company. In my spare time I try to see 3 movies a week, volunteer at an art house. My heart is with film - beside classic video games.

Secondly,]] I suck at playing games. I only finished Rick Dangerous I & II on the ST because I had the cracker's cheatmode on. I mostly collect ATARI 2600 games and stuff because I love their stunning artwork. Also, my attention span leaves me bored easily, I don't get the rush to kick the shit out of evil nasty bleeping squares and dots often. However, this old, ancient, simple, bald crudeness is part of what lead me back to the VCS some 6 years ago. That and the hypnotizing woodgrain.

I never had a VCS myself, but a friend had. The exact Demon Attack, Smurf and Tennis I used to play at his home so long ago, are part of my collection now.]] Seeing the VCS I played at another friend (he swapped it for a C64) years later, made me decide that this was a thing to cherish. The VCS became part of the many things in my hobby-driven life that make me want to go back to the innocent days of joy, happiness, glory and Thank God It's Friday.

Oh how I wish I could be a boy that washes his hair with R2-D2 shampoo, slept under Star Wars sheets with his Chewbacca doll and fall asleep dreaming of beating my dad at Combat.

My eyes fill with tears when I hear the moogs on my Meco and Geoff Love records.

But the Days of Disco-Fever and discovering dots in grottos where never mine. I was 2 years old in '77 and lived on the other side of the ocean - in Holland, where you had to be 16 to enter arcades. [[(I did spent that

(Continued on page 16)

the king of hardcore games

by Clint Dyer

When it comes to hardcore (read: Impossible) games, one person stands out in my mind as being the king. I'm sure there have been many over the course of time trolls lurking in the background, just waiting to make your game playing life miserable, but none that I know of that are so consistent in making hardcore games. The person I'm referring to is Ed Annunziata.

When I met Ed, he had just started at Sega (we actually started right about the same time) and my first experience with him professionally was with California Games for the Genesis. A game that I'll not go into detail about, since it doesn't fit into this article and because I can. So, I'll Skip to Spiderman, also for the Sega Genesis.

With Spiderman, Ed was given free reign to do pretty much what he wanted (as much as anyone is when working with Marvel). The results were the hardest game for the Genesis at the time of its release! The idea was to guide Spiderman through all the different levels, and at the end of each level, fight the boss bad guy. As is characteristic with almost all the games in this article (just keep reading) graphics were amazing for the time, gameplay was intriguing enough to keep you playing, even though you never got anywhere and control was dead on precise. What was different about this game from the majority is that it didn't get hard until about half way into the game when you reached the Sandman to be exact. How do you tell if a game or a part of a game is difficult? Work in Customer service. I was and this was one of the most often received calls on the tip line for quite a while. No one could figure out how to get past the Sandman, and even after they were told how to do it, they still couldn't do it! Those who did figure out and finally get past him were treated to even more difficult challenges in the later levels. To be honest, I'm surprised anyone ever finished this game! Moving right along, following up on the success of Spiderman, Ed was given Fantasia.

Fantasia for the Genesis was my most anticipated game ever! I loved the movie, I loved the music (which is strange, because I'm not a classical kind of guy) and the movie lent itself so perfectly to a video game that I didn't see how anyone could have done a bad job. That was until I played Ed's game. The graphics turned out amazing (read above :), simply the best graphics to be seen in a Genesis game. The music was also amazing with actual songs (this had almost been unheard of previously) that you could sing words to if you knew the tunes oh and there actually were words to the songs. That's where the good side of Fantasia ended. Control was simply impossible. The Sorcerer apparently forgot to tell Mickey how to go left, right, jump, etc. because there is absolutely no sign of any decent control in this game! To top it all off, the enemies in the game were so incredibly "mean" (by mean, I'm saying that they killed you without thinking twice on a regular basis) and hard to kill that the game turned out to be more frustrating; despite the great graphics

and music, than any other game I have played to this day. To his credit, Fantasia did fairly well for the Genesis and after Fantasia, Ed went onto Toejam & Earl.

Toejam & Earl also doesn't belong in this article it's one of the best Genesis games in almost all aspects! In fact, it really belongs in a "weirdest game concepts" article, which, now that I mentioned it, Joe will probably use next issue. Onto Ed's next impossible game Chakan: The Forever Man.

Again, Ed gets a popular license to pretty much do what he wants with. Although Chakan isn't as well known as Spiderman or Fantasia, it is a fairly popular comic book and the character is one of those characters that really lend themselves well to video games. And, Ed used the character to its fullest "dark" potential! The graphics again were unmatched on the Genesis. The level of detail in all aspects of the game was just incredible. Control was perfect (apparently Chakan had a better teacher than Mickey Mouse) and the variety of weapons to play with had never really been seen on the Genesis before. Gameplay, however, was another story. The enemies in the game were "mean" (read above) and in this game, there were so many traps and pitfalls and "instant death" places that you couldn't shake a long sword at them all. A frustrating experience to say the least, but not nearly as frustrating as Ed's next impossible game Ecco the Dolphin.

To be fair, nothing like Ecco the Dolphin had ever been done before. A game where you control a Dolphin who has to solve puzzles and move objects/etc.? I'm honestly surprised he pulled it off at all to be honest! As usual, the graphics in Ecco the Dolphin were breathtaking (to this day, I don't think that effect he used at the very beginning when the aliens grab all the dolphins has been matched). Control was fairly precise (or as precise as it could be considering you were a dolphin and the system was as powerless as the Genesis) and it was fun just swimming around and jumping out of the water. If the gameplay were just to do that, though, it would have gotten boring at a rather fast rate. So, he added puzzles, traps and other fun stuff to make the game more interesting. Unfortunately, it's in these gameplay features that the game lost its fun. In the second level where you had to push rocks with your nose to an exact place, the control just wasn't precise enough to accomplish these tasks without hundreds of hours of practice. I can't tell you how many times I was just a centimeter off from the center of a rock and it fell back down to the bottom and make me start off all over again or something similar with another puzzle happened. After about the third level, the game just wasn't worth spending the time on, as much as I hated to give it up (each new level brought cooler and cooler graphics I honestly have no idea how the development team did most of them). But, like all things in the game world, something newer and a bit less frustrating came along and Ecco

went to the shelf.

Following on the heels of Ecco, Ed did a couple of other games; Dungeons & Dragons: Warriors of the Etemal Sun and Toejam & Earl 2, none of which belong on this list in fact, it was widely complained that D&D was entirely too easy. Toejam & Earl 2 was pretty much the same as the first game, only more of it and more incredible graphics and more weird aliens and such to contend with. Ed's next impossible game was the follow up to Ecco the Dolphin, entitled Ecco: The Tides of Time.

Ecco 2 (I'll call it that for short) was light years ahead of its time graphically. Each new version I saw would bring new, more incredible things to the table and from that standpoint, I would have to say that it has no equal and looks better than half the Saturn and Playstation games. Unfortunately, though (as much as management was insisting on it), Ed didn't make the game any easier. And, again, to be fair, I don't know how he could have made it easier, barring some analog/digital combo pad being packed in with the system oh and you'd need a new system for the character animations/etc. as well. Also, to be fair, though, the challenge level of the puzzles and such could have been toned down a bit or at least made more lax (timing puzzles, etc.). They weren't, though, and Ecco 2 was history. Following Ecco 2, Ed went onto Saturn development and did one of the most bizarre impossible games ever made, Three Dirty Dwarves, although I'm not exactly sure if I'd call TDD an impossible game.

TDD was very challenging, but the gameplay was so incredibly bizarre that I think it was more a matter of just needing to change how you viewed a game (I wonder if that's what they're talking about in those Corona commercials) and I don't honestly know that the world was ready for that. As far as I know, TDD was the first game released in America that had 3 playable characters that had to play toward the same goal on the screen at the same time and 3 people could play those characters or 2 or 1 (Bomberman had more on-screen playable characters, but you could only fight each other). Above and beyond that, effects used in the game had really never been seen before and took quite a bit of getting used to. I had the fortune of playing TDD from the early stages and to this day, it's one of my favorite Saturn games, but if I picked the game up cold, I don't know that I'd be able to say that. If I picked the game up off a retail shelf, I'm pretty sure it would have made this list as one of the most impossible games I've ever played, simply for the reasons mentioned above.

Shortly after TDD, Ed moved onto his own company and his newest game, Tiny Tank for the Playstation should probably be out by the time this is printed (go to www.andnow.net for details). After going to his site, I see that he's got Chakan there as well I guess it's hard to give up old licenses, eh? :) Lastly, Ecco 3D has been announced for the Dreamcast (I'm not sure if Ed's Company is doing this or not), and from everything I've seen, it promises to be everything that the Genesis games should have been and more. Time will tell. In the meantime, I'm going to go play Baby Boom at the And Now site (Baby Boom is a game that would have been on this list, had it been released for the Genesis :).

THE NEW GUY

Part 2: Meet Larry Anderson

As I sit in a plane about 32K above terra firma, I find myself thinking, "Self, how best to write an introduction for the readers of DP? After all, they're probably asking, who IS this Larry Anderson guy?" That sounds more like a line out of an episode of Babylon 5 than an introduction, but I'll take a stab at answering that question here...

To give you a little background, I've been involved in the classic videogaming community since late 1991; I got bit by the collecting bug when in a fit of total boredom one afternoon, I pulled my Intellivision out of the closet. After blowing off the dust (yeah, tell me with a straight face that your old videogame unit was squeaky clean when YOU first pulled it out after years of storage), I plugged in one of my all-time favorite games, Tron Deadly Disks. I think I liked this game more for the movie tie in than the actual gameplay, because one could get so good at the game that you could shut down all conscious thinking and play the game on autopilot. After a marathon session there, I looked over at my pitiful box of 15 games and thought, "These things have to be dirt cheap by now, where can I get more?" The rest, as they say, is like yesterday's news; history.

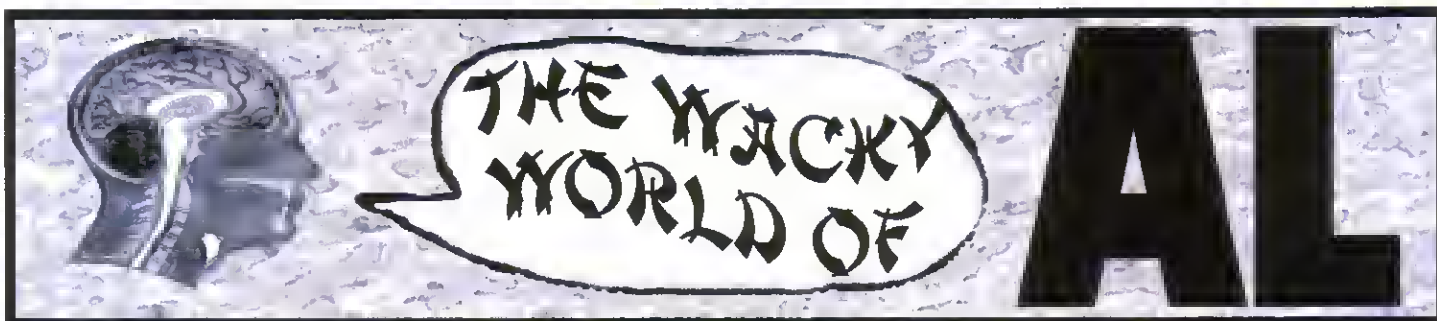
During my initial time collecting, I suffered from the "There's no way that anybody else could possibly be collecting this stuff" syndrome, thinking I was the only geek on the planet who loved old videogames. Then came widespread access to the Internet (which in the process of learning how to access the newsgroups & IRC I got into my current line of work!), and I met this great bunch of people who were into the same great games I was. I've made some incredible friends, and more importantly, been party to a lot of really cool, dare I say historic events as a result. If this all sounds a little cliché to you, it's probably because your own collecting story is similar to my own, if not exactly the same. Everyone gets into it for slightly different reasons, but one thing we all have in common is a love for games, and more importantly, a love for games that are FUN!

If asked what my favorite system is, I would say, "I've got two!". As you probably guessed, the Intellivision ranks up there (I tend to like the slower-paced, strategic games that were the focus of a great many Intellivision efforts). My other personal favorite is the PC-Engine, better known in the US as the TurboGrafx-16. I am an avid shooter fan, and this system provides the perfect fix for those late night Xevious cravings. It also plays a very mean RPG, and for it's time, the CD technology was nothing short of fantastic (I still feel that the cinematics in some of the more well-known titles rival those of many of today's "modem" games). Also, being the proud owner of a PC-Engine LT earns me many testosterone points amongst my fellow collectors =)

I try not to stay lurking in the wings all of the time; some of my contributions to the community include:

- The Intellivision FAQ, which was born of my own frustration in trying to find a one-stop source of information about the Intellivision before the Blue Sky Rangers resurfaced. If you're interested

(Continued on page 19)



THE WACKY WORLD OF A

Another Impossible Mission!

by Al Backiel



I had hoped to have play tested the PAL version of Impossible Mission (7800) in time for this month's issue. Rumor has it that this is the only complete version. I picked up several copies of the cart by trading overseas. For those of you that may not know, some 7800 PAL games (maybe all?) will not work on an NTSC

console. You may get the title screen, but that's it. Nothing, but a striped pattern. It will not load. I did have a PAL console. I just never tried to hook it up because the adapter had a strange 240v plug. I therefore thought I would try something when the game arrived. For some strange reason I tried to use a different adapter to fit my outlets. I don't claim to be an electrical engineer. As soon as I plugged it in the 7800 started to smoke like a toaster with burnt toast. Oh, shit! I guess I fried that sucker. I picked up another PAL system in trade. This time I used an original 7800 NTSC adapter. There was no need to be plugging into a 220v outlet, because the unit only needed 9 volts to operate anyway. Besides the adapter had the same jack. Damn it! Still only the title screen.

I would try one more thing as a last resort. I would spring for a PAL TV. The only place that I know that sells them is New York City. I found one in a discount store in midtown. I plopped down \$300 for a 14" multi-system. This TV could play anything. Two kinds of PAL, NTSC, Secam and more. Plus it came with a 110v adapter. I set everything to PAL. Same thing happened. Title screen, then nada. I must have used every curse word I knew of and probably came up

with some new ones. It was time to pack it in. The only thing I could think of that was stopping me was that I also had to be in a position to receive a PAL signal. Since I

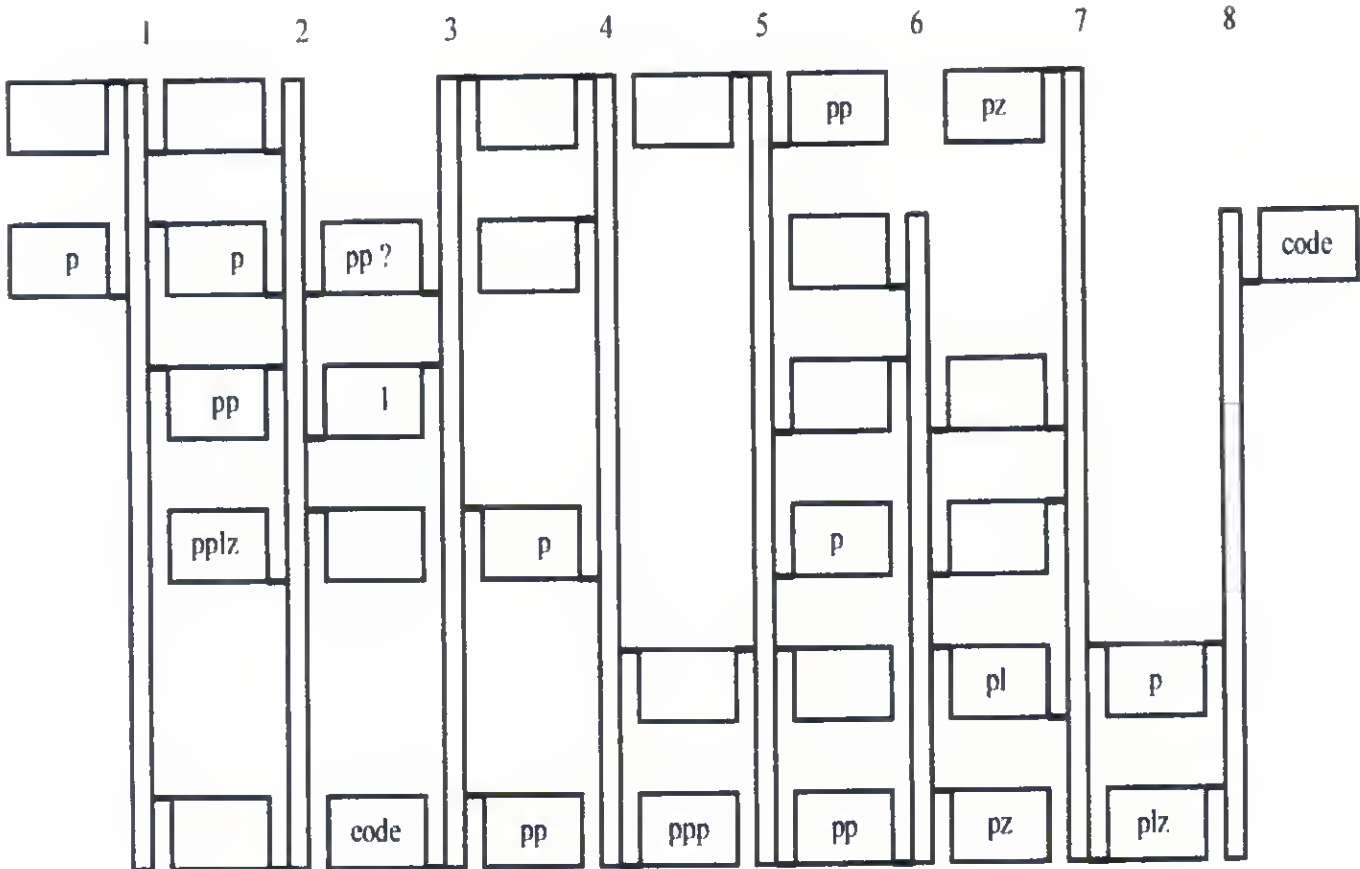
didn't plan on moving far, far away, I had used up all my options. Maybe somebody in a PAL country can tell me what I want to know or, how to make this system work. The only odd thing that I noticed about the PAL consoles was that there was no Channel 2-3 switch in the back. Even trying different channels didn't help. I still would like to get this system up and running, if at all possible, so that I can also get to play Sentinel, which was released in PAL only.

To facilitate matters, I have added a map of what I know about the NTSC game. There are actually 4 possible maps. The manual does not mention this. The one shown here is I believe is the default or first

map, which occurs after power up and start. To see the different maps, keep hitting reset. The start screen will show an immediate: left tunnel (see map), right tunnel, both left & right tunnels, or no tunnels. All versions seem to have 32 rooms similarly arranged and you always start at the top of the first elevator. I had neither the time nor the inclination to play out these other versions. Since the one I tried was incomplete, I did not trust the others. There could be a complete version somewhere. Perhaps one of our readers will be up to the challenge?



IMPOSSIBLE MISSION (7800 NTSC) map 1



p = puzzle piece KEY z = snooze (robots)
code = code room ? = mystery zone l = lift init.

TIPS

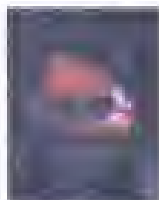
- ⇒ **Check out all objects for hidden items. There are none behind the regular terminals.**
- ⇒ **Stick your head in every room. You will be drawing a map at the same time of rooms covered.**
- ⇒ **Save all Snoozes for the tougher areas. They don't last very long.**
- ⇒ **Save Lift Inits for emergencies or traps. Getting zapped will reset all lifts anyway.**



PC Engine

Data West

Shooter



Larry

Element	Larry		
Graphics	7		
Sound	6		
Gameplay	3		
Overall	4		

multi player
same time

decent
game ending

variable
skill levels

data save
features

hidden stuff

non-linear
gameplay

When I think of impossible games, I usually think of games that make me beat my head against the desk after I turn it off (some of the titles reviewed in this issue definitely qualify, others don't deserve the page space needed to review them!).... While Rayxanber II doesn't evoke quite that level of emotion, it did put me dangerously close to throwing my beloved PC-Engine across the room in frustration. This game was Data West's first PC-Engine effort; a follow-up to a relatively unknown shooter (Rayxanber) on the MSX platform from some years before.

After a brief introductory screen, you're thrown right into the action... your small, somewhat slow moving craft against a fleet of larger, faster moving enemies who can come at you from pretty much any direction. The enemies are your standard deep-space fare; ranging from ships that split into five separate pieces to half-height robots with arms that extend in your general direction to crush you. If you manage to get through the first assault of ships (which took me several tries), you reach the first level boss, which is very reminiscent of the second level boss from R-Type. Defeating this boss was extremely easy, in sharp contrast to the ac-

tion leading up to that scene. I would love to comment on the remainder of the game, but I couldn't get past the second level! As you could guess, the difficulty goes up astronomically from here.

There are a few (very few!) points in the game's favor, however. You can get some power-ups by shooting small supply ships that drift onscreen occasionally; the blue variety will give you additional lasers that cover a decent portion of the play area, and the red power-up will give you a slow-travelling fireball that can inflict a fair amount of damage on the larger opponents. When the power-ups appear, there is a rotating bar to indicate which direction that the new weapon will fire (right for straight ahead, left for behind your ship, and up/down for above & below). Depending on the level, choice of direction is important, as there could be ships appearing from behind, above, below, etc. I would suggest staying away from the red power-ups, as most of the enemies move too quickly to make this weapon effective. By pressing the I button and moving the d-pad, you can obtain a quick burst of super-thrust that could possibly get you out of a sticky situation. There is a temperature gauge at the bottom of the screen that fills as you use the thrusters; too much thrust and you need to let things cool down before using them again.

In all other departments, this game is on-par with most other PC-Engine titles of the time... The style reminds me somewhat of games like Aero Blasters and Dead Moon (side scrolling shooters). It completely takes advantage of the advanced graphics capabilities of the PC-Engine (there are several layers of parallax scrolling), but the amount of window dressing used tends to be more of

a distraction than anything else. Scenery objects passing in front of your ship tend to obscure your view at key moments, usually right before you need to avoid the bullet headed right for you... The soundtrack is full CD-Audio, and is somewhat catchy but not by any means a blockbuster.

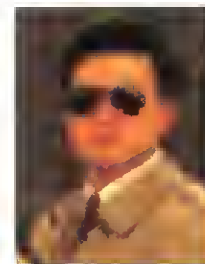
As if one game wasn't enough, Data West was kind enough to produce a sequel to this title (Rayxanber III, Super CD-ROM); while not as hard, I can't think of anyone who would take a chance on it after spending any time with this first installment.

All in all, Rayxanber II is another great example of a game that looks really pretty, sounds kinda cool, but just isn't any fun to play. Even as the dedicated shooter fanatic that I am, I couldn't recommend this title to anyone unless a) you just had to have every PC-Engine shooter ever produced, or b) you have a tendency towards self-inflicted pain.

If you fall into category b), then this game definitely has your name on it. Enjoy!



Cover art. Looks like it's time to take this metallic looking thing over to that planet.



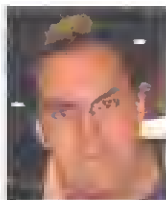
Mr. Anber the 2nd was not pleased that this game was named after him.



NES

Mindscape

Platform/Shooter



tsr

Element	tsr	Joe	
Graphics	5	6	
Sound	5	4	
Gameplay	6	4	
Overall	5	4	

multi player
same time

data save
features

decent
game ending

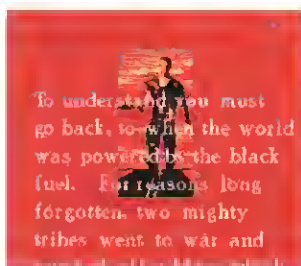
hidden stuff

variable
skill levels

non-linear
gameplay

Mindscape is probably the most overlooked company in the world of the Nintendo Entertainment System. The game label of the more serious software company The Software Toolworks, they fared much better on 8-bit computers (I still like the Commodore 64 version of Paperboy over all others, including arcade), their cartridge efforts over on the NES, while all original and not cheap imports of already made Japanese games, have apparantly no special features. They made 24 games - that's -twenty-four- games, and the only really noteworthy one is a great port of Gauntlet II complete with all the dowdy voices.

It didn't help any that most of their games are (a) movie licenses (b) set to such a stupefying difficulty level that you wondered if they hired The Flash as their playtester. The odd controls for their games may have contributed to this. The best example of that would be Conan, possibly the only platform game to require two buttons - Down and B - to crouch. Just pressing Down by itself makes Conan jump forward... not that you can't do this simply by running and pressing A.



It's all a lot of blah blah blah before you finally get on to the killing!

The concept of "impossible games" usually makes people think of 2600 shooters that never end; NES games, with their fancy endings, can't possibly fall into this category. People couldn't be more wrong. Two night-marish specimens float to my mind...

Mindscape's NES division never seemed to have the money to get real licenses. Instead they went cut-rate (is there a Big Lots for movie licenses?) and bought scratch-and-dents like Days of Thunder and worn-out "classic" flicks like Mad Max.

Each of the three levels in this game is divided into two parts - the Road War, and the Arena. The Road War is set in the greyish-brown landscapes that pervade both the movie and this colorless game. Max has attached an odd gun to his car that lets him lob sticks of dynamite right from the center of the hood, and he'll need it to survive. The object of this first part is to fend off cars and fortresses - all of which also shoot dynamite - and find enough food and water to barter a ticket to the Arena. Your average gamer will dead-end right here - you only have enough gas to last about a minute, and until you buy more or know where some is hidden you're endlessly restarting.

The Arena is far more exciting, taking place in a square-shape enclosure with holes that open and close. You have three chances to push or lure 30 or so enemy cars into the pits. The main problem with this is that it's impossible - in order to lure cars into opening holes you have to be so close to the hole that you almost always fall in anyway, and if you forgot to power-up your car in the Road War enemy cars can hit and bounce you around like a Ping-Pong ball on a tram-poline. Death might occur fairly often in the

wasteland of the future, but this is ridiculous.

But the true Power Player, undaunted by these trifling things, can persevere and make it to the final Arena on Area 3. There he will find Max facing a final boss, the Ultimate Warrior (not the great pro wrestler of years past, unfortunately). And you will find you cannot beat him. This drove me nuts. I would just die and die and die and die and die against this enemy. I would literally shoot every piece of ammunition I had at him and he still would not die. Arrgh. Doesn't Mindscape have any compassion?

In fact (and I only found this out by cheating with a Game Action Replay) there's "special" ammunition - crossbow bolts - you have to find in the Road War. This ammo is hidden in a mine shaft, though, that is so easy to miss I doubt anyone could have ever found it without being tipped off by Mindscape tech support. Just imagine the crying kids trying to finish this game, over and over, wasting their summer and gaining 200 pounds off of snack foods in the process. I was crying, too, at the end - the ending is only one static screen. And I'm not giving it away; you try finishing it.

CHEATER

You're gonna need this level select. Enter HUMU as a password to start at the Area 3 Arena or any earlier level. Note: To successfully complete the game, it must be started at the Area 3 Road War level or earlier.

GLADIATOR

rAnDom
ReVieWs

Arcade

Info

Fighting



dave

Element	Dave	Joe	
Graphics	4	4	
Sound	7	5	
Gameplay	5	3	
Overall	6	4	

multi player
same time

decent
game ending

variable
skill levels

data save
features

hidden stuff

non-linear
gameplay

Come and drop in a quarter...

(come and drop in a quarter...)

Play a game that is new...

(play a game that is new...)

Where the armor is his and his and hers,
Three's Company too...

Uh, I mean, we're playing Gladiator too...

Yeah. Right. Gladiator. Ever play Gladi-
tor? Probably not. It's kind of a bad game.
Like, pretty bad, but not like, "man, this
game is BAD, Yo!", more like, "uh, Mike,
why are you playing Gladiator? It's pretty
bad."

Every weekend night, in that magical mall
arcade of our misspent youth, my friend and
I shelled out all of our meager earnings into
the likes of Dragon's Lair, Punch Out!!, Ma-
jor Havoc, and Donkey Kong 3. On one par-
ticularly fun-filled evening, we were about to
leave behind the sights and sounds of the
game room when my friend informed me
that he had one more quarter. Actually, we
were standing in the darkest corner of the
game-room, where the less successful
games went just before they left the building,
and he said, quote, "Well, I've got one quar-
ter left, might as well waste it..." whereupon
he promptly deposited it into Gladiator.

Gladiator. It's goofy looking, goofy sound-
ing, and the hero is, well, a fancy-lad, but
after playing one game, you're hooked on it.
Here's the lowdown: you're a blue-armor
wearing Gladiator, named Gurianos, fighting
your way through a castle with nothing more
than a sword, a shield, and your wits. And a
codpiece. There are two basic stages: block
or sword lots of crap that flies at you from
sources unseen, and, fight a bunch of sword
wielding cretins. The order of the events is,
roughly, flying crap, fight three bad guys and
then a "boss." Repeat. After three levels of
play, Gurianos comes face to face with, ulp,
a skeleton! Defeat him and priceless treas-
ure is yours...until you're thrown back to the
start with a "but later, that same day..."
mentality not unlike Nintendo's classic,
Gumshoe.

Should Guri be unlucky enough to be hit
by a flying object (sword, brick, fireball, ar-
row, boomerang, mysterious ray, etc.), a
piece of his armor will fly off, leaving the skin
underneath exposed. A second hit in an
exposed area, even in an area as meaning-
less as his shin, will kill him. Tough, but fair,
since the villains fall prey to the same rules
and regulations. Hit 'em twice in the ankle,

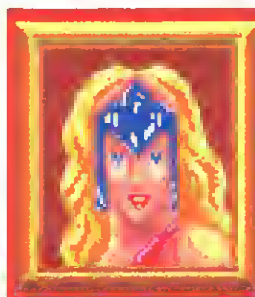
they drop dead. Makes sense.

Gladiator is a tough game, and "winning" it
is nearly impossible. Three buttons control
the sword fighting aspect of the game (low,
middle, and high attack) and the joystick
controls the rest of the action (move shield
up and down between the three positions,
along with walking). Rapidly shaking the
stick up and down should cause an impene-
trable glowing force field that lasts for sev-
eral seconds before fading, but this action
works less than half of the time, and rarely
when Gurianos could really use that extra bit
of assistance. Occasionally, blue crystal balls
(blue balls?) float by at the top of the screen.
Smashing them with the sword lands Guri a
brand new suit of armor. Gladiator's only
other helping hand comes in the form of fly-
ing spears (flying spears?). If he can man-
age to divert and retrieve four of them in a
row, his own sword will turn bright red (red
sword? What is the design team trying to
tell us?). Hitting an enemy's shield fourteen
times (not ten, not fifteen) with the red sword
will turn Gurianos into the Invincible Iron
Man for a few seconds and replenish his
armor to boot. In the event that Gurianos

(Continued on page 17)



Insert coin... if you dare.



The game has it's resident bimbo. IRENE's her name. Kinda scares the livin' crap out of
you, doesn't it? IRENE... IRENE...



GUN.SMOKE

Arcade

Capcom

Arcade



tony

Element	Tony	Joe	
Graphics	7	7	
Sound	8	7	
Gameplay	7	6	
Overall	7	7	

multi player
same time

data save
features

decent
game ending

hidden stuff

variable
skill levels

non-linear
gameplay

Let me start off by start off by saying that although vertical air/space shooters rarely hold my interest for very long, ground based games in this genre almost never fail to please. Maybe that doesn't make too much sense. But consider that games like Ikari Warriors, Heavy Barrel, Commando, and Gun. Smoke all seemingly have physical obstructions that make them more challenging to me than games like Dragon Spirit, 1942, or most others in this category, and I guess that's a halfway decent way I can justify my opinion.

Anyways, you assume the role of Billy Bob, a bounty hunter out to bring back a group of the currently most wanted criminals in the proverbial wild, wild west. Armed with nothing more than two Colt Single Action Army revolvers, it's up to this lonesome cowboy to not only take them out, but anyone stupid enough to stand in his way!

Fortunately, however, Capcom saw fit

to give Billy Bob a much better chance than you might think. First, his guns not only carry unlimited ammo, but fire as fast as you can press the buttons and never overheat. Also, there are power ups including boots (speed), rifle (longer range shots), and bullets (faster shots). Interestingly, you may pick up more than one of any enhancement, but it won't make a difference on your current life. Instead, they'll be saved until after you die, and you won't have to find whichever power ups you already had in reserve.

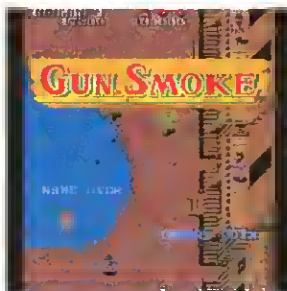
Audiovisually the game is above average but not outstanding. Being the old timer that I am, I can tell that some tunes are almost eerily reminiscent of Capcom's earlier Trojan (a fun game, and another bona fide classic, I don't care what the rest of the staff might think, damn it!). In terms of gameplay, it's good compromise between Commando's "shoot only in the direction you're facing" and Ikari Warriors' twist-

bie joystick. Different buttons allow you to shoot in different directions and you may simultaneously move in any direction. It also comes in handy when you need to quickly change direction of your line of fire in an emergency. Even though you are given unlimited continues, this game will still challenge even the toughest, most experienced players.

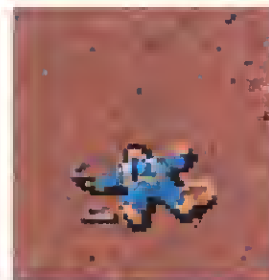
It should also be noted that some may criticize Gun.Smoke for racist or at least politically incorrect overtones, but personally I don't agree. Billy Bob probably kills many, many more whites than Native Americans, Mexicans, or Asians. But even then, I don't think it matters to him. But all of this is entirely academic, and should in no way hinder your enjoyment of Gun.Smoke on MAME, PSX, or even 8-bit Nintendo. It's wonderful to relive the good old days when you had to work your ass off to beat a game.



Watch what happens when you try to go into the water to escape. Nothing.



Capcom has had its fair share of classics but few as tough as this one.



This is the way Santulli looks most of the time. Must have been a tough night.

FANTASY ZONE



Sega Master

Sega

Shooter



dave

Element	Dave	Keita
Graphics	5	8
Sound	3	7
Gameplay	6	8
Overall	5	8

multi player
same time

data save
features

decent
game ending

hidden stuff

variable
skill levels

non-linear
gameplay

I went through a stage a while back where the only game I played, in addition to a daily dose of Robotron, was the Sega Master System version of Fantasy Zone. Why? Because it's impossible, and evidently, I'm a glutton for punishment.

Fantasy Zone, a largely unseen coin-op shooter produced by Sega, (our neighborhood arcades had two Joust2 machines, but no Fantasy Zone uprights...) is the story of Opa Opa (the Player) and his or her quest to rescue the "Fantasy Zone" from its enemies. In order to accomplish this daunting task, Opa Opa (a spaceship with wings and stubby legs) must destroy the enemies while hoarding the coins that they often, but not always, leave behind once they are defeated. Collected coins can then be used to purchase power ups, for example, bigger wings, larger engines, laser beam, wide beam, 7-way shot, or dual bombs.

Each level contains several "generators" (Menon bases) that must be destroyed in order to face the end of level boss, who, once defeated, allows the player to begin the next level, where the entire sequence of events plays out again with in-

creased difficulty and a new boss character. At the end of the game, the player faces all of the previous bosses in succession before confronting some sort of steroid-enraged Snafu creature that continually returns after its defeat until... Until, I dunno what. I haven't yet succeeded in defeating this "final" boss, and I dunno if I ever will. Fantasy Zone is "impossible."

Strategy? Destroy all the generators as quickly as possible, even if it means ignoring a lot of the smaller value coins in the process. The faster the generators are destroyed, the more their coins will be worth. Evade, rather than engage, the enemy. Avoid purchasing anything except for the dual bombs, which are very cheap, yet very effective, and extra ships. The other weapons are temporary, and, in the event that the player gets ambushed upon exiting the shop, a needless waste of coinage that is better spent on reserve lives. The wing and engine upgrades are a very good way to make controlling the ship an even more difficult task than it is at the outset of the game, but if you like headaches and don't need the extra ships, go ahead and buy 'em.

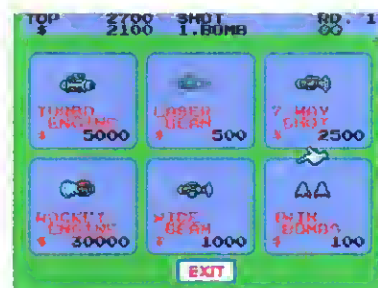
Oh sure, FZ looks innocent enough, and quite manageable, before playing it for the first time, but once the game begins, beware! The neon colors and cutesy, cartoony graphics are just a mask for the terrible demon that IS Fantasy Zone. In fact, it looks so tame compared to, oh, say, Defender, that one has to wonder whether Sega purposely created this wolf in sheep's clothing in order to create a more subtle quarter sucker than, oh, say, Gauntlet, which blatantly advertises the fact that more coins are needed in order to get anywhere. Fantasy Zone LOOKS easy, but it isn't. Therefore,

the enraged player will continue dropping quarters into the slot while saying, "Damn! This funny looking game with the toe-tapping soundtrack isn't even difficult! All I need to do is shoot those stupid generator things!" Before long, enough quarters for a week's worth of laundry have disappeared into the dark recesses of Fantasy Zone's gullet. At least Gauntlet begs for quarters: "Warrior - needs food - badly!"

The Master System incarnation of Fantasy Zone is a very respectable translation of the coin-op. Sure, it isn't quite as pretty, and the backgrounds disappear when fighting the bosses, and some of the animation is absent, and the screen no longer scrolls up and down, but for the most part this cart looks, plays, and sounds like its arcade counterpart, right down to the slightly awkward control. If the control was just a little bit better, the game would be about half as difficult. As things stand however, it's a challenging contest that will have lots of gamers up all night determined to beat it with the "just one more game..." approach. Don't say we didn't warn you.



The deadly pastels. Cold and calculating.



Does the power-up system remind you of Gradius? It should.

Impossible Mission Atari, for Atari 7800

The title says it all. This one really is IMPOSSIBLE! The result of a programming bug that occurred when the game was ported over from a computer version. There are supposed to be 36 puzzle pieces to collect, however, only 23 exist. I covered all 32 rooms. There was one room that showed promise, but it contained an area that was totally inaccessible. Even if it were possible, there would still be a shortage of items to collect. When I first played the game I didn't think anything was wrong. Just that I missed something somehow. After I had mapped the whole game out I became suspicious. I also became so frustrated that I posed the question, "Is Impossible Mission really impossible?" in my regular column. The answer is obviously, YES. I have heard rumors that the bug was fixed in the PAL version. But, so far I have not been able to verify this.

Basically, the game is a scrolling platformer with a time limit. Your alter ego is Special Agent 4125, who must scout around for hidden items in order to unlock the code and save the world from a missile attack. The screens or rooms are reached by elevators. You have to traverse some rooms to reach the next elevator shaft. A "room" may consist of 2 or more floors, which can be reached by lifts which are operated by standing on them and moving the joystick up or down. You can also drop through the floor openings, so long as you land on a solid floor. Special Agent 4125 can also jump in the direction he faces. He does a sort of forward flip. This looks like an early attempt at a martial arts move, however, in this case you can not take out an opponent. This move is just for jumping across holes or out of harms way.

Blocking your progress are robots, which are fatal even from what looks like a safe distance, because they fire a long, death ray. There is also a bouncing ball that has to be dodged on some screens. Every object should be examined for hidden items by pressing the joystick up when in front of it. If nothing exists, you will see the "nothing here" message. An item might be a puzzle piece or it may be a power-up such as SNOOZE, which will disable the robots momentarily. You also may turn up a LIFT INIT, which resets the lifts back to their original positions. To activate a power up you have to log onto a nearby computer and select from the menu. There are some areas that are so heavily guarded by robots that they must be distracted so that you can reach the lifts. Because so many puzzle pieces are missing, I have not been able to complete any of the 9 four-piece puzzles. So, I don't know what that is like.

Aiding your progress are: a computer menu, a hint phone, and the code room. The computer menu has all the options you'll need to play the puzzle pieces or activate a power-up. The phone can provide hints, which concern the puzzle pieces. Playing Simon in the code room can gain you power-ups.

This is the type of game that I could really get into. I love games where you have to use your mind as well as your reflexes. There is a unique sense of satisfaction when at long last you reach the end. Especially, an

ending that rewards you with a special animation. It is like you are seeing Mount Everest from the summit or something forbidden. Something few people will ever get to see. Unfortunately, this game is an exercise in futility and that's a shame because this is a decent game with a lot of variety. Just a little more play testing could have turned up the problems. I have given low marks for sound due the fact that it gets irritating after awhile. Because of this I usually play with the sound low. — Al Backiel

Déjà vu Kemco-Seika for NES

Here's an older title you may or may not recall. Kemco's follow up to their hit RPG Shadowgate was Déjà Vu, a murder mystery set during the 1940's. Interestingly, the unorthodox formats for the two games are almost identical, and both games are more or less successful.

In case you never saw or don't recall either game, the screen is divided into three sections: graphic, inventory, and action/story windows. Point and click to whichever you need to do on the window (example: use coin on slot machine) to progress. It definitely seems to have more in common with older PC titles than the flood of side scrollers, space shooters, sports sims, and adventure RPGs in the 8-bit Nintendo library.

Graphics are basically your standard NES fare, although given the visual quality of other games released at the same time period, they could have done much better. I do enjoy the music, particularly in the opening scene. It conveys a genuine sense of isolation and loneliness — two feelings which couldn't be more appropriate. The rest is basically generic, but usually not too bad. All of the music, however, will sooner or later get on your nerves. But, since sound clues aren't important here, you won't miss anything by turning the sound down or even off.

The premise is fairly simple and straightforward at first. That is until you progress further and find out what's really going on. Basically, you're framed for murder and have absolutely no idea who you are. Just like all those classic crime flicks, nobody's completely innocent (including you), everybody's got something to hide, and very little is as it appears.

As much as I'd like to discuss the storyline, it just wouldn't be fair. Slowly unraveling the clues and putting them all together before compiling enough evidence to clear your name is what makes this game so fun. It requires absolutely no reflexes, no hand-eye coordination, no precision timing of moves, and no run/jump/shoot skills. A very refreshing change of pace, to me anyways.

Déjà vu is not the best detective RPG I've ever played (that honor goes to Access' Mean Streets), and will no doubt completely turn off and bore many gamers well before they get a chance to experience all it has to offer. If you can pick it up for a bargain, I'd recommend doing so. That is, of course, if you don't mind a slow-paced thinker's contest. — Tony Bueno

(Continued from page 14)

Dirty Harry Mindscape, for NES

"But wait," I hear you say, "if you beat it, even with a cheating device, then it can't be impossible!" Picky



picky picky. To you I present another lame license, Dirty Harry, with another Mindscape-only record - the first game that's impossible even with a built-in invincibility code.

The game itself has your white-guy sprite battling it out against lots of little punky-hair sprites in the maze-like streets, and occasionally enter buildings and save little tied-up-lady sprites from really huge flickering guy sprites. The main good thing Mindscape could find to say about this game in their CES advertising was "Digitized sound. Actually hear Dirty Harry talk!" which, at 1990, was not going to floor your mom anymore.

Like Operation Wolf, this is a game of attrition. Punks are constantly punching you, shooting you, hurling dynamite at you, and calling you dirty names, and you have to duck into buildings to try and find life refillers. However, enter CLYDE as your password and you take no damage from enemies. So, no problem, right? Let's kill all the drug scum and restore peace to this sunny city!

Well, not quite. Harry Callahan's bane in life becomes not energy, but crowbars. Crowbars? You need to find crowbars to open locked doors, which lead to where the tied-up ladies are. Some locked doors, though, are decoys and go to plain white rooms. And, like all video-game items, crowbars break (or something) after one use so you need multiples. And, crowbars are only found in crates that give only a limited supply. So, unless you are absolutely perfect in your guessing which doors are correct to open, you will run out of crowbars. Then Dirty Harry is doomed to walk the streets forever because he can't open any doors, and you reset. Sorry.

Oh, I suppose someone could actually try mapping the whole city (the city is Escheresque; exiting right does not necessarily mean entering left) and spending endless nights trying every door and playing the game over and over again, but this, like most Mindscape games, seem like they were made with only five colors, has music that will make you yearn for the symphonic suites of BMX Airmaster, and have very little play value to boot. In other words, you first. - tsr

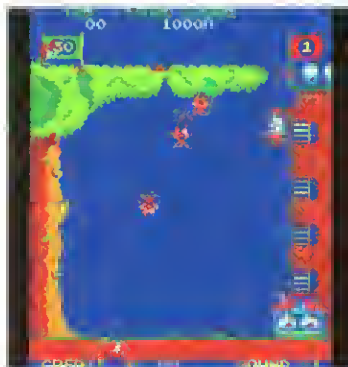
Pooyan Stern/Konami for PSX

What we have here is a timeless, classic scenario

that has delighted young and old alike for hundreds of years. Innocent lil' piggies and their loving mom are attacked by merciless, bloodthirsty wolves! Throw in a bow & arrow, some bonus stages, alternating levels and you've got yourself the makings of a classic arcade title.

Pooyan could easily have fallen into the Space Invaders or Defender clone category, but leave it to eccentric video game designers to produce a charming, challenging, and engaging contest despite the oversaturation of early '80's shooters.

Basically you play mama pig in an elevator operated by Buuyan (another pig). The bow and arrow used to combat balloon-toting wolves may also be augmented with large slabs of pork (which is probably more than a little morbid). When a set number of wolves plummet



to their death, you move on to the next level, where you get to face even more wolves. Odd numbered levels contain descending wolves who bite at mama from mountain cut-outs behind the elevator; evens require the prevention of ascending wolves from shoving a

boulder to destroy the elevator. There are also at bonus stages in which meat is your only projectile against harmless enemies, or those in which you normal arrows must strike fruits such as apples and strawberries. If I were a shooter fan, it'd probably get higher marks. But even still, Pooyan ranks slightly above average. I sincerely enjoy the intermissions, cheerful music, strident drum solos, and primitive yet unmistakable howling. I would be lying, however, if I said most of the sound effects (release of arrows, balloon inflation) didn't get on my nerves. Like probably well over 95% of classics, the fact that it is impossible to win a game which isn't finite only increases its appeal. No matter how far you get, nor what score you accomplish, the game will always end with your death - perhaps allegorical on the absurdity and pointlessness of all life, but I doubt it. Pooyan is recommended. -Tony Bueno

Rompers Namco for Playstation

Here's a game which should probably be damn near impossible to obtain. Rompers was included in Namco Museum Encore back in 1997 and it was produced in limited quantities in Japan only. It also included such overlooked classics as Motos, Rolling Thunder, and King & Balloon along with the duds Skykid and Wonder Momo. It's a pity that so few will ever see this disc or Rompers (which I don't believe was released in the States and isn't included in MAME), but I guess it's cool for those who have it.

Released in 1989, Rompers was a precursor to more recent titles such as Trog, Neo Mr. Do!, Namco's own

Random reviews
LITE

Random reviews

(Continued from page 15)

Dig Dug update, and (my apologies in advance to all other DP staffers) all those overrated Bomberman follow ups. Rompers is superior to all other maze games released in the 1990's, however, and is one of the true lost treasures of our most beloved hobby.

From the prologue (not that it really matters), we learn that a devilish character and his fairy henchwoman have kidnapped the girlfriend (or sister? wife? friend? mistress? mom? co-worker? relative?) of a rather hickish young man, decked out in overalls and wide-brimmed straw hat. The fairy carries her away over a huge, imposing labyrinth, and our Tom Sawyer-looking hero must venture forth to save her.

The object in each level is to pick all the keys whilst avoiding enemies. Levels are composed of both stationary and moveable walls which may be shoved onto adversaries and their nests. A few speed up power ups assist, while the monsters get more and more bizarre. How bizarre? Pink and blue rhinos breathe fire or ice to kill or slow you down while little tile creatures (reminiscent of the work of R. Crumb) push down walls over you. Ghosts (some with cigarettes!) mindlessly pursue, and rhinos roll up into a ball and charge, to name a few.

Audiovisually, Rompers pleases and makes me laugh with its intermissions and humorous animation. Add this with insanely unfair scenarios (i.e. an anti-bonus all-spider stage every 10 levels), agonizingly close defeats, and at times frustratingly difficult levels and you've got yourself a real winner. While this game is almost certainly finite, I still can never summon the patience and courage to make it to the end. After around level 50, well, you might give up too.

Rompers is quite simply the best title on the best disc in the entire Namco Museum series. Namco and Sony must sincerely hate American consumers to not allow this gem to be released here. What a fucking shame, but at least those lousy cunts didn't prevent me from getting mine. Highly recommended. -Tony Bueno

THE NEW GUY

(Continued from page 4)

Summer of Sam in the States, but can't remember, but it may be possible that seeing A New Hope at the Drive-In then, fucked me up for life).

A frustrated kid now, I own that Star Wars merchandise just mentioned (part of a giant collection worth a trip around the globe - star class), only to trade in my angry SW-collecting craze for collecting classic video games.

Over 500 VCS games further and a couple of years later, this frenzy has stalled too. Like SW, it has become too hard and expensive to keep it going. My biggest thrill in the hobby has always been in scoring at fleamarkets and making good trades, but my resources here have dried out. Even my trips to the once so great goldmine-fleamarkets of Germany bring me no luck.

Now I find fulfillment in writing about the VCS for the magazine you read now, as had in working on DPG5, organizing Euro-Con '99 and maintaining my Ancient ATARI PAL*Division site. [[Whenever I pick up a new hobby I drive myself to become a specialist and know all there is to know - and then I feel I need to share my knowledge with the rest of the world. 4 years ago I ran the only gecko-site (yes, the lizard) on the web which I closed down because I couldn't handle the email-traffic it generated. I currently host the only Movie Trailer Collector's Forum online. I read a dozen movie production & post-production magazines and books a month. I am never bored and doubt I will be.

But anyway, this is who I am, and I] now you know 'why I am an Atarian'. That and the hypnotizing wood-grain.

Roloff 'Deleto' de Jeu - drdeleto@dds.nl

IMPOSSIBLE PROGRAMMERS

by Roloff de Jeu

No, I'm not gonna bore you with my impossibility to catch the thief in *Keystone Kapers* and do some police brutality on his ass.

I want to talk to you about impossible-to-program-games.

Now if I'd take a DeLorean, fly back to 1980 and show the guys at ATARI that were about to start ActiVision some of the more (graphically) stunning VCS games of years later, would they be shocked with disbelief? Or would they quickly point out the bigger ROM size and complain about their programming kits? The original first programmers and creators of the 2600 estimated that only a dozen or two different games could be made on this programmable Pong-DeLuxe machine.

We all know Pac-Man sucks because Tod Frye had to do with 2K (as he claims). Yet he managed to produce *California Games* in the late Eighties, working at Epyx. At CGExpo '99, A French programmer showed Frye a stunning port of Pac-man, with graphics and motion as good as the arcade version - on a 2600 no less! Frye just nodded and went off to play his favorite classic game: Craps in the casino downstairs.

What has always stunned me is the difference in quality of the first games that come out of a game console and the ones made for it years later. Apparently, programmers become more inventive along the way, and figure out ways to hack around the impossibilities of the machine.

A limitation in resources often forces improvisation and can lead to very original and creative solutions to problems. Just take a look at some of the indie-low-budget movies that have been made in the last couple of summers. They may not be showcases of visual eye-candy, but sure have great plots, characters, dialogues and are move you emotionally.

A couple of years ago I went to a great seminar at CGIX (a European equivalent of Siggraph) called "Why Today's Games Suck", and I'd like to end with the same plea as the host did. Please you (classic-platform) programmers, with all the tools available these days, don't forget to be creative as well. Thanks to the internet, sales, marketing and distribution is not a burden, and is something you can control yourself. EMUs, FAQs and home-made developers kits, free carts (packaging) and cheap (EP)ROMs make it so easy compared to the Eighties to program - but make one lazy and spoiled as well. Show us something we not haven't *seen* before, but haven't *played* before. If you succeed, here's a slogan you are free to use: "GAMEPLAY DOES MATTER!"

And a lot of great products are team-efforts by the way, so if you're a great math nerd but suck at design and writing story, ask someone else to do it for you!

If you can't find anyone - I'm available.



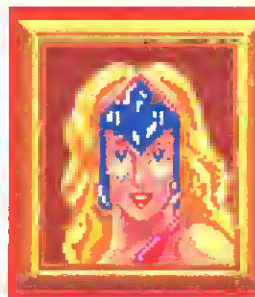
(Continued from page 11)

reaches the final scene with Mr. Skeleton, he needs to bear down and get ready for the battle, and laughs, of a lifetime. Skeletor here wears no armor, but his bones fly away when they're hit. After a while, Gurianos is facing nothing more than a disembodied skull and a sword-wielding bony arm that magically float back and forth in space. Crack his cranium with your sword and gather up the booty. Er, treasure.

If this game still sounds less than exciting, it's likely because it's full of odd sound effects and voices that really add to its overall "charm". Gladiator, for instance, shouts out, "Vo! Vo! Vo!" in a Gauntlet-esque Warrior voice while slinging his sword, the lineup of bad guys taunt Gladiator and laugh at his defeat, and armor flies off to the very appropriate sounds of metal on metal. The music is a borderline fall-down-laughing theme that, while not as catchy as the Super Mario Brothers anthem, will fade into and out of your memory at the oddest times.

There are other nice touches here as well. All of the participants' shields get damaged from whatever punishment they receive, and the contestants all sport absurd under-garments, including sock-garters, beneath their armor. Yes, a female warrior makes an appearance a couple of times during the game - try and knock off all her armor - she's wearing pasties underneath it! Pasties! Gurianos can pickpocket the downed bosses and make off with their weapons, and tastelessly takes a poke at one of the stiffening corpses. One of the villains even falls over in one of two different ways, depending on whether or not Gurianos defeats him with a, uh, sword to the groin. Seriously.

Soul Calibur this game is not, but then, perhaps in some twisted way, it is an ancient forefather of the latest and greatest sword fighter. As long as you go into it with low expectations, you'll be pleasantly surprised. At first. After a few games though, you'll be cursing the machine and screaming at Gladiator. "Grab the freakin' sword! Damn! Quit your prancing around and just run up the stairs!" Sadly, in the event that you do ever get to the skeleton waiting for you at the end of the final level, you'll most likely never want to play the game again. Unless, like me, you're wacky in the head. As dopey as the game is, it's still fun. "Vo! Vo! Vo!..."



IRENE...

IRENE....

We love you. We miss you.
Please give up the holy crusade and come back to us, baby.

-the DP staff

mission: impossible?

by Dave Giarrusso

'Ja ever see Star Wars? You know the scene where General Dodonna is briefing the Rebel Pilots about the best way to attack the Death Star, and he mentions that they have to hit a thermal exhaust port, and that said port is about two meters wide? About then, one of the wimpier pilots pipes up, "That's impossible, even for a computer." Luke responds by informing this yutz that, "it's not impossible, I used to bullseye womprats in my T-16 back home, they're not much bigger than two meters." While you may have felt that Luke was merely trying to boost Wimpy's confidence prior to a suicide mission, he also managed to slip in the fact that he's a not such a bad pilot himself, and that he recklessly killed Womprats for sport. And you thought Luke was one of the good guys.

When the subject of this issue, impossible games, was put on the table, that's the first thing I thought of. Then I thought of some nice chicken parmigiana. I was hungry. The next thing I thought of was the Epyx game, Impossible Mission. Of course, since I only played that game for about three seconds a long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, I figured a discussion of that game was best left to someone else. Then, I really started thinking about all of the games that really challenged me over the years.

What I realized is that no matter what the time or place, some game, somewhere, had my number. Ironically, that game was never Odyssey 2's "I've Got Your Number."

Which brings me to a point, or at least, something I discovered while accessing the ol' long term memory in preparation for this issue. There are roughly three types of impossible games:

- 1) Impossible games that you love to play, and in fact, beg for continued ass-kicking from. Sinistar clearly falls into this category, as do a lot of the older Williams games. I've never gotten beyond the fifth level of Sinistar without employing the old "255 lives" maneuver. It's a tough as nails contest, but you love it. You're pushed to keep on going no matter what the cost is because you have to meet the absurd challenge in order to see what the game has to offer.
- 2) Impossible games that you not only don't want to play, but that you give up on after fourteen seconds because they are not only uninteresting, but are overly frustrating, often due to control problems that shouldn't exist. 2600 Double Dragon falls into this category.
- 3) Impossible games that you could take or leave. They don't inspire you to continue exploring them until every subtle nuance is uncovered, but you aren't prompted to set them aflame with a blowtorch either. They're good for a few go-rounds, but even if you sit through an entire game in order to see the end, you'd probably quit

playing it after that. I'd place the Swordquest series here, along with a lot of others.

The impossible-journey began way back when I was a nearly carefree youngster constantly playing the Atari 2600. A friend of my brother lent him the Raiders of the Lost Ark cart, and we sat in front of the "blue screen with the rock" and the "screen with the marketplace" utterly dumbfounded, for three days. We discovered many ways to kill Indy, but after the joy of murdering everyone's favorite archaeologist wore off, we gave up on the cart. The game was just too tough. Or so we thought until a few days later when the same friend loaned the solution (or a variation thereof) to us and we finally dredged up the Ark of the Covenant... and killed Indy a few thousand more times. The point here is that, for us, this game was downright tough, nay, impossible, until we were handed the solution. I may also add that even with the solution securely in front of us, it's still a tough game.

After the Raiders debacle, other 2600 games turned out to be "impossible." After Swordquest: Earthworld was marked down, I picked it up. I read through the instructions, read the "comic", searched the comic for clues (and found all of those cleverly hidden words, like in "Highlights" magazine, where you have to find the rhino so cleverly concealed in the girl's hair, unless some unruly brat spoiled it for everyone in the dentist's waiting room by circling all the hidden objects with purple crayon...) but all of my effort was for naught. I couldn't figure out the game. It was impossible. To this day it remains impossible, although I did use a "walkthrough" in order to solve it. I couldn't do it again, and frankly, the hows and whys of where the objects go still makes no sense to me, so therefore, this game (and the other two Swordquest games) are still, to me, impossible. Even 2600 E.T., while difficult, at least makes sense in a "get this object, go there, do that" kind of way, even if its production and licensing fees did not. What will the future Indiana Joneses of the world think when they unearth all those copies of 2600 E.T. in Mexico? Probably, "ouch."

Late in the 2600's career, after the NES boom was practically in full swing, Activision attempted to bring Double Dragon to the VCS. They did not succeed. They brought a cart with a Double Dragon label to the VCS, and they brought an impossible game to the VCS. Double Dragon it was not. (Was this shoddy effort a preview of later Activision bombs like the 2600 and Intellivision Playstation CDs that they carelessly and shamefully crapped out in an effort to make us vomit? Come on Activision, what gives? Do it properly or don't do it at all.) I've said it before, but it bears repeating: the Double Dragon coin-op is a fun, while very easy (read, easily "won" on one quarter), butt-kicking romp for revenge. The VCS version is truly one of the most difficult games I've ever seen. One can barely move through the first screen width of the city before being reduced to a blubbing

mass of jelly. Oh, and your on-screen alter ego winds up getting killed as well. Furthermore, it's so tough and so poorly done that you have to really fight the Darwinian urge to yank the cart out of the console, fire it at the wall, jam it in the toaster, throw it into traffic, etc.

Could we adequately discuss the topic of impossible games without mentioning the NES favorite, Ninja Gaiden? I'd definitely call this one an "impossible/don't wanna see it anymore" game. I recall the game being extraordinarily difficult, but, when prompted to by that video game fanatic deep down inside all of us, I could get to the end of it. The end of this game is the reason I'll always refer to it as impossible. If, through some miracle, you actually got to the end, and if you began attacking the final guy (who, I really may not, in theory, have seen if he pulled one of those stunts like in the original Castlevania) and if you were killed by him and actually had more lives left...you still had to go BACK to a much earlier point in the game in order to try, try again to kill him. I was almost pressed into taking the game up again when a friend of mine challenged me by saying he could win it. I asked him if he ever had won it to which he responded, "no, but..." Subsequently, one night, he was on his way to the end of the game, which he had been playing non-stop for hours, and invited me to watch him complete the Gaiden mission and deflate my gaming ego. Needless to say, after several thousand attempts, he conceded defeat and we never spoke of Ninja Gaiden again. Until now. To anyone who has beaten this game without the assistance of any sort of cheating: you have the resolve of Rocky and the patience of Mother Theresa. Good job.

Somewhere around this time, I became hopelessly addicted to the almost-Stargate-sequel, N.A.R.C. (Well, in both games, you have tons of buttons to contend with, both have lots of enemies attacking from the left and right, both include radar screens, in the same section of the screen I might add, to see what you're dealing with...) N.A.R.C. is an insanely difficult game, and is nearly impossible to get through without "continuing." In an effort to get the most bang for my buck, I always started the game over from the beginning instead of continuing - Adam Smith would be proud - for two reasons: One, the difficulty ramping is very high, so continuing a game halfway through lead to a three-second game, followed by another, followed by another, and, two: those three second games weren't as fun as starting fresh and ridding the streets of scum all over again. Somehow, as a result of this process, I wound up getting to the point where I could ace the whole game on a single quarter, but make no mistake: the final few rounds of this game are indeed impossible. When you're facing hundreds of well dressed, gun toting psychopaths, (HQ Posse) and then an evil Ironside, (Mr. Big) and then a giant head on an animatronic platform, and finally a big skull, it's kill or be killed, and the odds of success are a million to one. The trick is to take full advantage of the early stages. N.A.R.C. is the rarer impossible game that really kicks you when you're down, but you keep crawling back to it because it plays so well. It encourages you to play perfectly, and in the process, see and hear a TON of cool stuff.

Other impossible games I've played? How about Ghouls N Ghosts for the Genesis? A difficult game with great graphics and sound, and the one that made me rush out to the store and buy the 16 bit Sega console. This game was one of the carts just MADE for staying up all night in your friend's basement with plenty of Doritos and Mountain Dew. At about three thirty in the morning, after you had re-played the sequence leading up to the final boss for the umpteenth time, something magical happened - you beat the game. You may never be able to do it again, and you may only try the very

next day and give up forever even if you succeed, but for that one shining moment, you had done the impossible and beaten the game. It's "impossible" because it would still take as much effort to beat again if I plugged it in today, but I would have the tendency to give up on it sooner because in the back of my mind, I know I've already seen it all.

Of the newer games I've played, the most vivid example of an "impossible" game is Hasbro's Frogger. This game is impossibly frustrating and as such, no fun at all. Through no fault of the player, Frogger leaps into obstacles that cannot be seen, and suffers a fate worse than death as a result. The camera doesn't keep up with the action, and the control is terrible. This game lasted a full five minutes in my PSX before finding its current employment as a coaster for my ice-cold Coke while I'm playing anything else. Except 2600 Double Dragon, which is under the short leg of the table that supports my soda/coaster combo.

I suppose that none of these games, even the revamped Frogger, are truly impossible by a Webster's definition of the word, and maybe there's something hidden in that fact. Maybe, like Luke points out to Wimpy at the end of Star Wars, these impossible games are only impossible because I think they are. Then again, maybe they aren't. Maybe no one has gotten to the end of NES Ninja Gaiden. Or PSX Frogger. Or 2600 Double Dragon. Or maybe they have. Except for 2600 Double Dragon, which nearly everyone used for skeet shooting practice.

THE NEW GUY

(Continued from page 6)

in reading it, Lee Seitz has a link to the most recent copy on the Classic Videogame Nexus webpage.

- One of the founders of BAVE, the Bay Area Videogame Enthusiasts. By the time this issue goes to press, we will hopefully have revived interest in the group and begun our regular meetings again. If you live in the San Francisco Bay Area and are interested in either attending or possibly hosting a meeting, please drop me a line!

- Other than that, I can be found hanging out waiting for something cool to happen that I can help out with (thanks again to the CGExpo guys for letting me lend a hand in what I feel was an extremely successful show).

If you guys have questions or opinions that you'd like to share with me, please feel free to e-mail me at retrogmr@ricochet.net. Happy gaming!

Now I just hope the pilot can avoid that plane that seems to have crashed on the runway in front of us....

Larry Anderson

Telesys' The Impossible Game

by Leonard Herman

One of the most impossible games to find for the Atari 2600 is the appropriately titled *The Impossible Game* from Telesys. Much debate has been made on the subject whether the game exists at all. It does. Or at least it did at one time. It was displayed at the 1982 Winter CES and I actually played it. When representatives from Telesys gave me review copies of forthcoming games, I asked them if I could have a copy of *The Impossible Game* because I liked it so much. "Sorry," they said. That game was targeted only for the Far East so there wasn't any point in giving a copy to an American journalist. (For the record, the review games I was given were *Ram It!* and *Stargunner*).

Since I really enjoyed *The Impossible Game*, I took copious notes. It is one of the most detailed games that's featured in my booklet *ABC To The VCS*. My hope is that one of the new breed of 2600 programmers will take my description and program a new version of *The Impossible Game*.

Recently, while writing an article about Ralph Baer for *Games Magazine*, I came across a hand-held game that Ralph designed which was probably the inspiration for *The Impossible Game*. Now you all know who Ralph Baer is of course (I know you all read *Phoenix!*) Well in case that shameless plug went over your head, Ralph Baer is the person who invented videogames. (Forget what you heard about Nolan Bushnell and *Pong*. Baer invented videogames - case settled!) Well besides inventing the Magnavox *Odyssey*, Baer also designed a slew of videogames and hand-held games such as the Coleco *KidVid*, the Coleco *Telstar Arcade* and Milton Bradley's acclaimed *Simon*. Well the first electronic game that he designed was an obscure hand-held from Coleco called *Amaze-A-Tron*.

The *Amaze-A-Tron* was a rectangular unit with 25 numbered squares on its face and a built-in TI TMS-

100 microprocessor. The computer randomly determined a path from one square to another which the player(s) had to figure out. The unit informed the player the starting and ending square numbers via an LED (light-emitting diode) display. It was then up to the player to find the correct route. This was accomplished by moving a piece to a square adjoining the one that the player's marker was already at. If the move was correct, the computer would respond with a pleasant tone. If the move was wrong then the computer let the player know by sounding an annoying buzz. In two player games, each player attempted to reach the finish line before his opponent. In some variations players had to return to the starting square whenever they took a wrong turn. It is this last variation that we're most interested in.

Although not credited as such, *The Impossible Game* was a video version of the *Amaze-A-Tron*. However, where the hand-held unit consisted of a grid of 25 squares, the video version contained 36 squares. In order to win the player had to get through six levels, each progressively harder than the one before it. In the first level players only had to figure out the maze one square at a time. By the time they reached the sixth level players had to figure out the maze six squares at a time. One wrong move and the player was sent back to the beginning. Impossible? Probably not if you had lots of luck and time on your hands. A better title would have been *The Improbable Game*.

The best part is that unlike *The Impossible Game*, the *Amaze-A-Tron* is readily available through auctions and flea markets!



Worship the Woodgrain: Y2K Edition

ResQsoft has recently announced the availability of the 2nd edition of the Worship the Woodgrain (WTW) CD collection for the 2600. WTW is a collection of nearly 400 Atari 2600 games designed to play on your Atari 2600 using a Starpath Supercharger. It is important to note that these games will not play on an emulator. The first edition was limited to 50 copies. The 2nd edition of WTW is designated as the Y2K Edition. The Y2K Edition is also a limited release. Meaning that about 50 copies will be made available as well. Based upon demand, more might be made available, however, they will not contain the limited Y2K Edition badging.

The 2nd edition includes many new games that were not available for the 1st edition. Highlights of the Y2K Edition, include some ultra rare games that are not even available as binary images yet on the net. Two of the most notable titles include Bumper Bash and Out of Control. The Y2K Edition also contains 2 new unreleased prototype games that are not available anywhere else yet. They'd like to tell you about them, but you are going to have to buy the discs and find out for yourself.

Why every 2600 fan would want to have this collection. The idea behind "Worship the Woodgrain" is to put fun games in the hands of collectors, at an economical price, that is easy to use. This compilation is professionally produced so your wife (spouse, significant other, etc.) will have a hard time complaining about it sitting next to their stack of Mozart CDs in the family room (or maybe you are into Motley Crew or the Grateful Dead.. whatever..) In any event, WTW is not a "hack" job. Most folks who, would otherwise have an extremely difficult time putting a ROM image on a cart, now have a chance to play these games on a real Atari 2600 with all the appropriate accessories. Ever try to play 4 player Warlords on an emulator? There are also many collectors, like us, who own a warehouse full of Atari 2600 carts, but find it a real pain in the keester to sift through them to find the game you want to play. Additionally, many games are next to near impossible to acquire (if at all, like one-of-a-kind prototypes). Then there are those people who do not have a computer or internet access. This CD compilation is for ALL you folks.



Where to buy: They are available directly from ResQsoft. Email: ResQsoft@earthlink.net Web: <http://home.earthlink.net/~resqsoft>

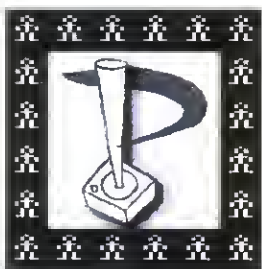
Or write them at: Lee Krueger 21312NE 10th Place Redmond, WA 98053

Costs: \$50 + shipping (1/2 the price of the available multi-carts with nearly twice as many games. No dip switches to mess with either)

What you get for your money: 4 professionally packaged CDs in a jewel case with cool color inserts and a color manual. The CDs contain nearly 400 Atari 2600 games.

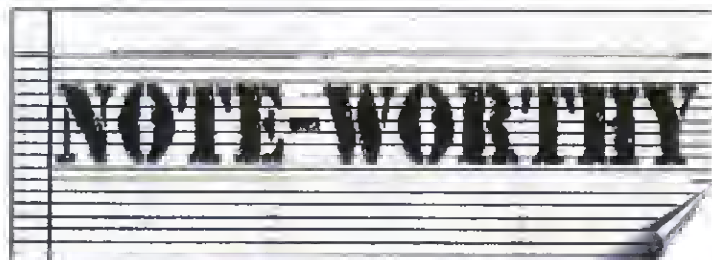
Please check the WTW FAQ for more information: <http://home.earthlink.net/~resqsoft/wtw.htm>

ResQsoft Research & Technology: <http://home.earthlink.net/~resqsoft> Check out the Atari 2600 CD Compilation for play on your Supercharger: <http://home.earthlink.net/~resqsoft/wtw.htm>



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classic gaming on dreamcast?

Over 300 classic games coming to Dreamcast? In the February of 2000 Sega of Japan will begin distributing its digital goods via the Internet. The first step will be music, then shortly thereafter comes the game content for the Dreamcast. To kick off the launch of its Internet gaming capabilities Sega plans to release over 300 titles from Sega's Mega Drive (Genesis) and NEC's PC Engine (Turbo Grafx 16). Dreamcast owners will need a special GD-ROM to download a game. Each game ranges between \$1 to 3 U.S. dollars. The downloading process, if no kinks are attached, should take no more than a matter of minutes. The games are then stored in the memory for a limited time. The first batch of games include **Pac-Man**, **Sonic**, **Columns**, and **Outrun**. No U.S. plans have been made as of yet...

for the hardcore gamer only

ArcadeWare (<http://www.arcadeware.com/>) announces the arrival of The Arcadium Arcade Gaming System — A revolutionary new home entertainment system with a retro twist. The Arcadium, engineered by a team of hard-core gaming enthusiasts, brings back the classic feeling of the old-style arcade games by providing an exceptionally-crafted arcade-style cabinet, with lockable keyboard drawer, fully functional coin-door, universal gaming control panel unlike any created to date — with authentic arcade joysticks, buttons, trackball, and spinner, and an integrated PC tailored for high-performance gaming. This single, complete gaming entertainment system provides gamers a one-stop solution for playing the old-school Classic Arcade Games, as well as providing a fantastic platform for current and future PC games. The Arcadium Arcade Gaming System also comes bundled with: Williams Arcade Classics and Midway's Arcade's Greatest Hits - The Midway Collection 2 — providing endless Classic Arcade Gaming entertainment. But, that's not the extent of the capabilities of the Arcadium Arcade Gaming System. The Arcadium is also perfect for other gaming system emulators such as MAME, the Multiple Arcade Machine Emulator, and Bleem! — the SONY PlayStation Emulator, as well as various Coin-Op Software Titles. And, of course, the highly compatible Arcadium control panel enhances most PC game titles as well — virtually any PC game that utilizes a keyboard and/or mouse is compatible with the Arcadium. The Arcadium Arcade Gaming System has a street price of \$5999.00 — a perfect gift for the Millennium! For more information on the Arcadium Arcade Gaming System, contact public.relations@arcadeware.com or sales@arcadeware.com



Digital Press is dedicated to the memory of my best friend
and DP co-creator, Kevin Oleniacz.
Kevin's spirit will be with us through every homing missile fired, knockout punch delivered, UFO destroyed, and finish line crossed.

Play recklessly. Think positively. Live EVERY moment to the fullest.